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ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 011036Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6590  
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE

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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/BSC AND EB  
BRASILIA FOR JSTORY  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [UY](#)  
SUBJECT: UY MOVES TO PREVENT DAMAGE FROM PROTESTS

11. (U) Summary: November 29, President Vazquez ordered the Uruguayan military to create a protective ring around the controversial Botnia paper mill in order to prevent possible acts of sabotage. The GOU also filed a complaint against Argentina with the International Court of Justice demanding an end to the blockade of bridges between Uruguay and Argentina by Argentina protesters. The Argentine ambassador to Uruguay has asked for details of the force to be deployed, and Uruguayans wonder if Argentina or Argentine protesters might take the presence of troops as a provocation. End Summary.

#### MILITARY TO THE PAPER MILLS

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12. (U) November 29, President Vazquez ordered the Uruguayan military to create a protective ring around the controversial Botnia paper mill in order to prevent possible acts of sabotage. The army will patrol the land surrounding the plant near Fray Bentos, and the Coast Guard will monitor the river near the plant. Argentine protesters, who blocked major bridges into Uruguay last summer and resumed the blockade this November, have long reviled the plant, and the GOU fears that the protesters may attempt sabotage. Press reports indicate that earlier this year thousands of eucalyptus seedlings were stolen from a Botnia facility by protesters who left a note justifying their actions. The military is still formulating its plans to execute the President's order. Botnia currently subsidizes the salaries of 50 Uruguayan policemen who guarded the facility and will continue to patrol the Botnia property.

#### URUGUAY FILES IN ICJ

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13. (U) On November 28, Uruguay filed a complaint against Argentina in the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The formal document claims that the GOA has done nothing to stop the blockade of an international border by Argentine protesters. It asks that Argentina take "every reasonable and appropriate measure at its disposal to prevent the interruption of transit between Uruguay and Argentina." Local politicians seem resigned to the fact that the ICJ process will be incredibly long, and they continue to seek alternative measures.

#### COMMENT

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14. (SBU) Just as Vazquez and opposition leader Larranaga met recently in a show of solidarity with Botnia, we note the potential for Argentina to do the same with Gualaguaychu's protesters. The Argentine Ambassador to Uruguay immediately asked for details of the

planned military force which will be located immediately across the river from Argentina. The military force could possibly antagonize the protesters or the Argentine nation and lead to a serious escalation of the dispute.

BAXTER